

CACTUS AND SUCCULENT JOURNAL

Of the Cactus And Succulent Society
Of America

Vol. XVII

JULY, 1945

No. 7

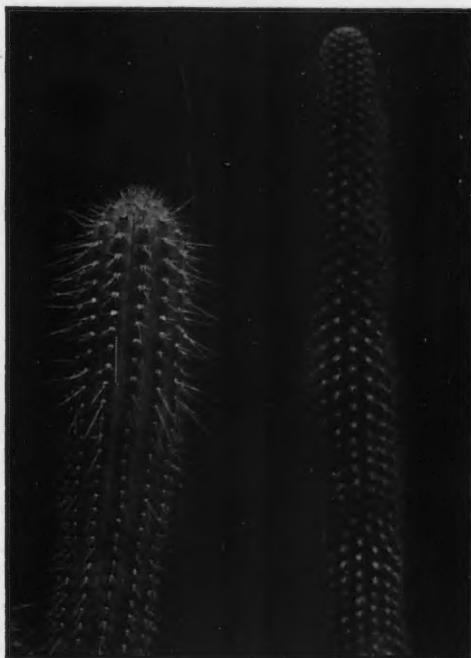


FIG. 71. (Left) *Cleistocactus tomiensis* and (right)
Borzicactus aurivillus. R. W. Kelly rare plants



CACTUS AND SUCCULENT JOURNAL

Published and Owned by the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc., Box 101, Pasadena 16, California. A monthly magazine to promote the Society and devoted to Cacti and Succulents for the dissemination of knowledge and the recording of hitherto unpublished data in order that the culture and study of these particular plants may attain the popularity which is justly theirs. Subscription \$3.00 per year. Foreign \$3.00 per year by international money order. Membership in the Cactus Society free with subscription. Mail application to SCOTT HASELTON, Editor, Box 101, Pasadena 16, Calif. Editorial Staff: THE ENTIRE SOCIETY. Entered as Second Class Matter at Pasadena, Calif., under act of March 3, 1879.

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Amendments to the by-laws of the Cactus and Succulent Society. Proposed at the June meeting of the Board

Amend Article II, Section I as follows:

The officers of the Society shall be as follows: President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall each hold office for a term of one calendar year, and a Board of Directors consisting of these officers, the Junior Past President, the President Emeritus, when such office is occupied, and twelve other Directors. Appointive officers (Corresponding Secretary, Editor and Librarian), shall be ex-officio members of the Board.

Section I A:

The Directors shall be elected for a term of four years, only three of the Directors to be elected each year. To obtain proper rotation in elections, the current Directors shall be appointed in groups of three; the first group to serve until December 31, 1948; the second group until December 31, 1947; the third group until December 31, 1946; and the remaining two Directors to serve until December 31, 1945, when they will be replaced by three Directors to be elected in the 1945 election.

The first group shall consist of Directors Baxter, Kelly and Gates, the second group of Directors, Craig, Strong and Sloane; the third group of Directors, Brown, Woods and Cariss, and the fourth group of Directors, Monmonier and Rush.

Amend Article III, section 2, to read:

The term of any appointive officer shall be one year or portion thereof and may be terminated at the discretion of the Board prior to the end of the calendar year for which they were appointed, except the Editor whose term of office shall run concurrently with his contract.

NEW BOOK FROM GERMANY

In September, 1944, J. Neumann published the *Cactus Yearbook* of the German Cactus and Succulent Society. This 136 pages of Curt Backeberg's classification and distribution of cacti is printed on a fine grade of coated paper and contains 44 distribution maps. As in all of Backeberg's classifications there are many new words such as *Boreochinocacti*, *Nyctocephalocacti*, *Heliopolyanthocerei*, etc. Thanks to Lt. Lindsay, a large camera man at large, for this first cactus information from Germany. Watch the JOURNAL for the availability of this and other new books.

EPIPHYLLUM PUBLICITY

The Weekly Magazine Section of the *Christian Science Monitor* carried a front cover and two inside pages of Epiphyllums in color. The author and photographer was Frederick Miller and the date of issue was June 9, 1945. The April, 1945, issue of *Arizona Highways* had two full pages of Epiphyllums in colored rhoto gravure. The Schmidt Lithograph Company of Los Angeles and San Francisco issued a 1945 calendar picturing two Orchid Cacti. Each of these was spectacular and of exceptional interest yet each presented the same difficulties for perfect color reproduction. Later the JOURNAL will carry an article on the color photography of Epiphyllums. The editor offers a life subscription to the JOURNAL if you can send him a perfect 35 mm. Kodachrome slide of *Vive Rouge* or one of the solid red colors.

Three different plants of *Epiphyllum Strictum*, grown under different conditions and locations all flowered the same night in Pasadena, July 1. Does locality and climate influence the time of flowering and can the flowering period be changed?

Sphagnum Moss for Seed Germination is the title of Leaflet No. 243 issued by the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. Write to Supt. of Documents, Washington, D.C. Price 5 cents.

WHAT KINDA CACTUS IZZAT? by Reg Manning, famous cartoonist of the Southwest. This 100 page book is packed with humorous cactus drawings which are based on hundreds of interesting facts. For amusement and information, this book is unique. Ideal as a gift book for those who hate or enjoy cacti. Cloth bound \$1.30 postpaid.

MESEMBRYANTHEMA by Brown, Tischer, Karsten. \$8.75.

"Notas Sobre Cactaceas" by C. Osten. This book is printed in Spanish on the Cacti of Uruguay and contains 71 full-page pictures of native cacti. The book is 7½x11 inches and contains 84 pages plus the well printed plates. Only four copies available, \$5 postage paid.

SCOTT HASELTON

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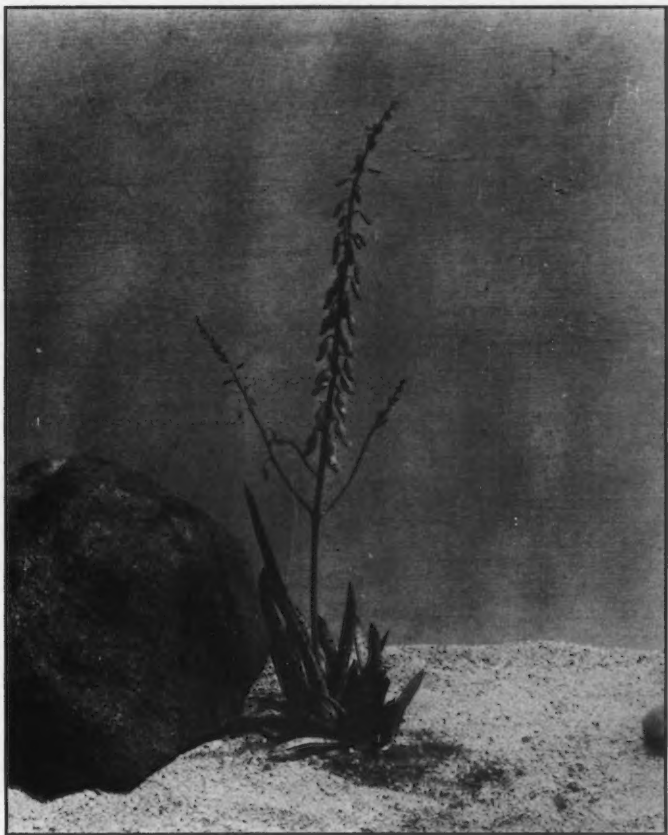


FIG. 72. *Gasteria caespitosa* Poelln. approx. $\times 0.25$

GASTERIA CAESPITOSA Poelln.

By J. R. BROWN

This attractive little *Gasteria*, named and described by Karl von Poellnitz in *Kakteenkunde* (1937) 165, is now becoming fairly well known in collections of succulent plants.

Mature plants have a very short stem and are very proliferous from the base and soon form a dense cluster, as the specific name *caespitosa* would imply.

The leaves are described as being exactly distichous or in two opposite rows, but as seen growing here, the oldest rosettes have slightly spiralling leaves. They are usually somewhat erect but may be more or less spreading, 10-14 cm. long, about 2 cm. wide at the base and gradually narrowing from the base to the tip, the width in the middle of a leaf usually about 1 cm. Both leaf surfaces, in cultivation here, are slightly rounding but at the apex the leaves are flat and thin. The apex of the leaf is deltoid-acute with a somewhat pungent point.

The lower leaf margins are smooth, becoming tubercularly roughened above, while towards the apex the margins have a very narrow, distinct paler edging which is almost smooth.

The green color of the leaf is strongly overlaid with somewhat roundish white spots which are more or less united, giving a handsome dappled effect, which in conjunction with the hard, glossy leaf surface and also its apparent ease of culture, tend to make this a very worth while little *Gasteria*.

The flower stem may be simple or branched, with attractive reddish flowers which appear during April and May in Southern California.

It was found at Somerset East in Cape Colony, South Africa, and was introduced here several years ago.

A plant grown out-of-doors is shown in the illustration. This little cluster consisted of 12 plants and was 11.5 cm. in diameter.

AFFILIATE NOTES

Please mail your Affiliate Notes to Chas. A. Place, 5048 Hook Tree Road, Rt. 1, Box 388T, La Canada, California.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome The Beverly Hills Cactus Club of Chicago, Ill., as our newest Affiliate. The following is a report from their Pres., Mrs. Radden.:

"We organized a new cactus club Jan. 9. There are eight active members meeting in our homes; therefore, our club will have to stay small as we cannot accommodate a large club. Our officers are: President, Mrs. Margaret Radden; Vice-Pres., Mrs. Nellie May; Treas. and Cor. Sec., Mrs. Mary Vandervort, and Rec. Sec., Mrs. Marion Berry." From Mrs. Vandervort (Cor. Sec.): "The Beverly Hills Cactus Club have a small but very interested and congenial group. Our first meeting, held Jan. 9, was given over to election of officers, organization, and future plans. On Feb. 6, we drew up the constitution and by-laws, and had some discussion of cacti. At our March meeting our President discussed *Pereskia* and *Epihelanthe*. April meeting was a discussion of plant diseases and cactus literature. One member brought a pot of seeds started in 'Mica-grow.' May 1, meeting we were taught grafting which was very interesting to some of us who had never seen it done before. At each meeting we always enjoy the cacti of our hostess."

Two live wires in one club, it should be a success. Mr. C. L. Wiese (Pres.) writes:

"The Cactus and Succulent Society of Oklahoma met Sunday, May 20, at the home of Chas. and Mary Polaski for a farewell party for Dr. Milton Hopkins, Chairman of the Dept. of Plant Sciences in our State University, who with Mrs. Hopkins, is leaving for New York to engage in Scientific work. We had a large attendance which included Dr. Glen C. Couch, Dean of the University College and director of student affairs, and Dr. Geo L. Cross, the University President, with their families. We enjoyed seeing some 1500 succulents and cacti, an unusual exhibit of rare crests as well as 119 fancy camellia plants in their four greenhouses. Dr. Hopkins, who has traveled extensively, said, 'I have visited some of the finest cacti and succulent collections in the United States and I have never seen anything like this.' We are proud that a member of our club has accomplished and achieved to win such fame and be able to retire young to enjoy their hobby."

Congratulations, Friend Wiese, on holding the office of President in such an outstanding club. Ethel Rush (Cor.) writes:

"The Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society met at the home of the Abercrombie's and was well attended and enjoyed. The genus for discussion for the day was *Echinopsis*, led by Mr. Abercrombie, and the plants of *E. eyriesii* were given to all present. The discussion brought out the fact that these plants seem to require a great deal of food and water in our climate and that it is increasingly difficult to obtain reliably named species. The question of the differences between *Echinopsis* and *Lobivia* were discussed, such as the variations in flower shape and color, and that *Echinopsis* blooms at night while *Lobivia* is a day bloomer. It was pointed out that in spite of the similarity of the two genera it has always proven impossible to hybridize them, Dr. Poindexter having tried many times to produce an *Echinopsis* with the color to be furnished by one of the red flowered *Lobivias*. The review of Mr. Marshall's *Contributions for a Better Understanding of Xerophytic Plants*, was continued through the chapter on Systematic Botany, with a lively discussion following. After the meeting everyone went into the garden to enjoy the

plants. Mr. Abercrombie has a very fine garden with a large collection of cacti and succulents, with many fine specimens of *Trichocereus*, *Lobivias*, *Notocactus*, and many other genera in the open gardens and one of the finest collections of Haworthias in Los Angeles, housed in his lathhouse. Many of the plants were in flower and every one enjoyed the garden and the meeting very much."

There must be a difference between *Echinopsis* and *Lobivia*, they are not even spelled alike! E. Worthington (Pres.) writes:

"The Amateur Cactus and Succulent Society of British Columbia, at their April meeting, asked me to take over the duties of publicity convener in addition to my present job as President of the club. So I will try to keep you posted as to what is happening up here in B.C., at least as far as Vancouver is concerned. Our Round Robin Secretary, Mrs. Channing, has resigned as she is moving to Trail, B.C. Here she hopes to continue to grow cacti and will let us know the results of her labors. Miss E. Worthington was appointed in her place. On the 5th, and 6th of May, Mr. A. E. Marchanton held open house at his collection. He has about the largest collection in town and the plants were looking fine, some bloom and lots of buds, particularly on the night bloomers. At the regular May 18 meeting we held our first plant auction for this season, twenty-four lots were donated, and with the President as auctioneer, we realized \$8.50 for the treasury. There is considerable debate in the club at present on the question of whether to start a club library or not. Miss Gilbert, one of our West Vancouver members, has been appointed convener of a discussion group taking 'Cereus Speaking' as the discussion matter. On Wednesday, May 23, our President was 'interviewed' at one of the local broadcasting stations, being on the air for about eight minutes. This is the first time our club has had this pleasure; just what fruit it will bear we shall perhaps be able to tell you later—up to the present we can only say, one telephone call, one potential member. This seems to cover our activities up to the present. I will try and give you some more news from the far north in the future."

A good library would be a great help in the study of these interesting plants.

Dorinda Bright (Publicity Chairman) writes:

"The Southern California Cactus Exchange continues to carry on with good attendance, high enthusiasm and new members are taken in at each meeting. The regular meeting for May had about fifty present and we were treated to a talk by Wm. Taylor Marshall, author of several books and traveler over the western hemisphere, but better known as the President Emeritus of the National Cactus Society and frequent contributor to the JOURNAL. Mr. Marshall spoke on books and their use and enjoyment by cactus admirers. His talk reviewed the history of books which relate to our hobby, their increase in value and pointed out how they could be used when the plants themselves are inaccessible. His talk was not only enjoyed by our group but was highly enlightening. After the program there was an auction of donated plants and the Exchange treasury was benefited to the extent of \$13.25 which has been earmarked for the purchase of books for the Exchange library."

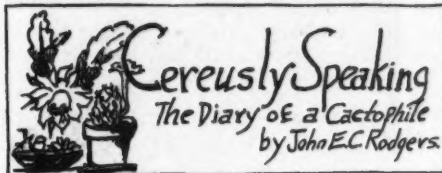
In a good library, knowledge is at least available. Ladislaus Cutak (Editor of the Cactus Digest) writes:

"The Henry Shaw Cactus Society contributed a wonderful display of cacti and other succulents at the Spring Flower Show of the St. Louis Horticultural Society. The success of the Show itself could well be attributed to the cacti section, as a large portion of the spring flowers were ruined just prior to the show by

Continued after the Center Section

one of worst hail storms since the devastating one in 1927. The Cactus club put on a fine show. There were more entries and more, and better plants exhibited. We gave out 25 blue, 19 red, and 18 white ribbons."

Well Lad, I don't think enough can be said in praise of such a laudable undertaking under the present conditions.



July 1. Enjoyed the Cactus and Succulent pictures in "Arizona Highway," April, 1945. Twelve color pictures. Beautiful as any I've seen. You who have red points but no meat will look longingly at "Arizona Spring Lambs." Article about cliff dwellings is also noteworthy. BUT those kodachrome pictures of *Heliocereus speciosus*, *Epiphyllum Ackermannii*, and "Sun Cereus" are TOPS.

July 4. Independence Day. *Nyctocereus serpentinus* bloomed! Decapitation of one of twin stems in 10-inch pot May 15 proves my theory that it blooms best when kept from growing while buds are developing. Two other years buds aborted when growth began. Eureka? Has 7 other buds which I shall watch. All develop?

July 7. *Mammillaria kewensis* in bloom, rich raspberry-purple. Always one of the last ones of these "spring-bloomers" to blossom. *Rebutia fiebrigii* also bloomed. Very much like our *Minuscula* which blooms intermittently all summer. *Huernia penzigii* (Black Dragon) full of buds; bloomed late in June. *H. aspera* is also budded. *Hylocereus undatus* budded. Has stopped rapid growth. Stems budded have "rattlesnake-like-rattle-ends." Announcers of intention to bloom last year, also. Bloomed last year July 24. Saw 1/4 inch buds on July 6. Quicker action than most of my "Creepers-Climbers" species.

July 10. *Crassula perforata* and *C. hemispherica* doing their darndest to impress me with their minute oral beauty. Enjoy foliage more. Blooms "dirty-yellow" with "blackish pollen masses." Last long time? No doubt, but don't hold breath for loveliness, it just ain't there. *Opuntia compressa* first 43 blooms now in the awkward stage. Dried blooms still covering flower scars. *Rhodanthe* hasn't bloomed but "Rho" means red, so I'm hoping.

July 13. *Cleistocactus strausii* (Silver Torch) 14 inches high with a five-inch offset. A prize in any man's collection. Spines soft and satiny-white. Likes plenty of light but not full sun all day. M. & B. mention it on page 106 as the "unnamed variety." B. & R. mention, Vol. II, page 226, as a variety of *Oreocereus celsianus*. Likes rich well drained soil with plenty of root room. The variety *juiyensis* is not spectacular and branches freely under my greenhouse conditions that I have 6-7 inch heads with two more started in a 4-inch pot. The seedlings came from Johnson through dealers as far as I can ascertain. I water both plants every other day during summer and once a week during winter.

July 14. "Richer soil for cacti" is my slogan. Too long I've approached the subject by indirection; now I say it openly. Feed your plants. Use "vigoro."

Perhaps before we cactophiles cut our "plant-teeth" it was well to say go slow, but I find the mortality rate is lower if good soil, perfect drainage, and "good-plant sense" is used. "Plant sense" you scoff—yes, sir, I say plant sense. Experiment, we may lose a few, but who of us hasn't? More power to you. "Three year old cow manure" and sand in equal proportions is working here in Ohio as well as in Canada for *Epiphyllums*. Only draw back, they creep out of the pots because of weight of fast growing stems. So stake! Cascade! But support!

July 15. *Coryphantha runyonii* bud has pushed back the imprisoning spines and the fringy pink petals are plainly seen. Spine bug (*Eriococcus coccineus*) a favorite boarder if given a chance. Use one teaspoon of "Black Leaf 40" to one quart of water and spray. Soak 'em! Bug cases just shrink up. Lady nicotine is the answer and it's not rare in these Victory garden days. Use it also to soak roots of potted plants if you see ants tunneling. I make it stronger but it's hard on my throat—Poor *Eriococcus*!

July 16. *Hamatocactus setispinus* and *Thelocactus bicolor*, two of my first loves, before the senoritas from Mexico and South America turned on the attraction, are sulking. Really regret it, too. They bloomed in 1945. Every season before that. Light? Watering? Heat? Plant needs?

July 18. Letter from Eugene and Violet Ziegler, cactophile friends since 1932 (see Part I, February, 1942, JOURNAL, page 28 and 29). Want me to come to Spenceport, New York, for vacation. Will I? you bet. Cactophiles make the best friends, I've found. Long way back to 1932, but it's a hobby friendship! Eugene made me a cactophile for good when Sandy, Rufus and I visited them in 1932.

July 21. Potted up plants from cutting boxes. Getting ready for my summer travels to visit cactophiles. To see collections, collectors and get new material for "Cereusly Speaking."

July 23. Beds of concrete, down center of Cleveland City Greenhouses where succulents have been kept are now torn out. Getting ready to put in "naturalistic" planting like other cities have used for xerophytes. Just hope that "public familiarity," official indifference and negligence are not as much in evidence as I've seen in a few places.

July 27. Set all of my Euphorbias out on lawn and let sprinkler soak them for an hour. Euphorbias are lost from roots dying back usually in my case because of too heavy soil or on the other hand from too much drainage. My Euphorbia soils are bolstered up with clayey soil in the sand and humus. This holds moisture but does not become soggy. Once a week waterings during the winter, steady temperatures (50-55°) and kept away from drought means healthy plants. Strong sunlight for hours at a time is not beneficial. So far there is no worry about too much sunshine (120 days is the average around Lake Erie) 45 days so far including June.

July 31. Spent blooms on *Hylocereus undatus* ready to fall off. *Epiphyllum cartagense* bloom dried back to ovary looks pink but not much development. Not near enough in family relationship to be hybridized. Had dreamed of *Epiphyllum cartagense* X *Hylocereus undatus*. Guess I forgot "*Epiphyllum cooperi*" a *Selenicereus* hybrid. I would like *Cereus* (fulgidus) *maynardii* B. & R., II, page 210—an orange-scarlet "night blooming cereus." Brought back plants from Cleveland Garden Center. Used bay windows. Several bloomed and were "oh'ed and Oh'ed" by the elite as well as the "plain dirt under-the-fingernail-type." Wet spring. Wet summer. Looks like a cool season.

EPIPHYLLUM NOTES

PHYLLOCACTUS PHYLLANTHUS, Lk.

From *Kakteenkunde*, Oct., 1892, Vol. II, No. 5

Translated by Ed Gueguen

This interesting species is of epiphytic growth; its most favorable habitat is in humus, whether this be gathered in the forks of branches of forest trees or accumulated in moss-laden cushions. From there it lifts its slightly flexible branches, which soon requires support, to lean on other species or neighboring plants and fastens itself by short air-roots. The branches are little different from those of other *Phyllocacti*.

The flowers grow from the areoles of the branch and have an irregularly angled, green ovary which is strewn with single little scales. The perianth tube is curved wave-like, also angled and scaled here and there; it tapers gradually and is about the thickness of a pencil at the middle, with a length of from 6 to 8 in.; it is of yellowish-white color. The flower corolla is just under 1½ in. in diameter, the sepals are yellow and greenish outside, the petals white, all having a lanceolate shape and are pointed; their number hardly exceeds 20.

The stamens crown the flower margin, they overtop it only at the third part of the petal-length. The style is thread-like and runs out into a spherical-headed stigma, which is set with about eight finger-like, compressed, bowed radii.

The fruit is angled, fusiform, truncate at both ends, at times shorter and oval; it has a carmine-red color and encloses numerous nearly reniform, shiny, pitted, black seeds in a juicy, fibrous, white pulp.

It grows in Brazil and is also reported from Guiana.

This beautiful species, remarkable because of the flower form deviating from all other *phyllocacti*, is at present rarely found in cactus collections. Earlier it was more often cultivated; Jacquin gave a good illustration of it in "*Hortus Schoenbrunnensis*" t. 403, as it sumptuously bloomed in 1804. Pfeiffer also described and illustrated it, Taf. X., Fig. 1. A few specimens of it were sent to me from Brazil; I made a drawing of this material for the "*Flora Brasiliensis*," Taf. 54. (Shown here.)

The plant was known to Linne, who described it as *Cactus phyllanthus*. It is doubtful to me whether he had actually seen living or dried specimens; it is more likely he based the species only upon a good illustration from Dillenius "*Hortus Elthamensis*" t. 64. Other sketches, which were later cited under the same name, certainly do not belong to this species, especially the plants which are of Mexican origin.



Fig. 73. The first *Epiphyllum* illustration in *Kakteenkunde* was called a *Phyllocactus*.

An error is widely current concerning the habitat of the plant. Most books state that it is native in the Antilles. This opinion is definitely untrue; neither in the "*Flora of British West Indies*" by Grisebach, nor in the catalogues from Cuba and the Caribbean is it mentioned. I have likewise never come across a trace of it in the herbaria, although I believe I remember that Wulfschlaegel collected it in Dutch Guiana.

A new importation of *Phyllocactus phyllanthus* would be recommendable.

If one judged nomenclature rightly, according to priority the plant should be called *Epiphyllum phyllanthus* Haw., since this distinguished author in the field of succulents separated it from *Cactus* in 1812 and based the genus *Epiphyllum* upon it. The name *Phyllocactus* which Link created, dates from 1834. We may not consent to the views of Pfeiffer, who used an entirely different meaning when he reserved the name *Epiphyllum* for the zygomorphic forms of *E. truncatum*.



SPINE CHATS

LADISLAV CUTAK



Three years ago this month the HENRY SHAW CACTUS SOCIETY came into existence. I can't help but feel proud of the progress this Club has made in that short span of years. When I called the first meeting in the historic Museum Building, where the First Cactus Convention met a year earlier, twelve members were present to discuss plans for the organization of a Cactus Club. Little by little the membership began to grow until today the roster is composed of 57 active members, 11 associate, 30 subscribing and 4 honorary. One of the first things we did was to publish a mimeographed monthly for we realized that an informal paper, even if of few pages, would tend to bind the members more closely together and keep up the spirit for which we were organized. That we were right in this prediction is attested by the fact that the CACTUS DIGEST is now enjoying great popularity and is not only going out to our Active and Associate members but to many others throughout the country who have asked to be put on the subscribing list. Last Fall the Club staged its first public exhibit in the Floral Display House at the Missouri Botanical Garden and attracted some 7000 visitors. This Spring an even more pretentious display was put on and really "saved the day" for the St. Louis Horticultural Society which annually sponsors this event. The unusually bad weather caused a dearth of spring flowers but the cacti and succulents were not affected and therefore "stole the show." The Club plans to stage two shows annually and in that way hopes to spread interest in these fascinating plants. Other ambitious projects have been started or are contemplated and we know that they will be carried out with success for the HENRY SHAW CACTUS SOCIETY is composed of enthusiastic, as well as energetic, cactophiles who are always striving to make it one of the outstanding clubs in the national fold.

* * *

Travelers in our southwestern deserts are acquainted with the common Creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) which covers thousands of square miles in almost pure stands. It is one of the outstanding xerophytes with a strong characteristic odor, especially noticeable after a rain. From this common desert shrub chemists at the University of Minnesota have extracted a white crystalline compound, called NORDIHYDROGUALARETIC ACID or NDGA which has the property of preserving sweet flavor in foods containing animal or vegetable fats. The solid is derived from the dried leaves and stems which contain up to 7 percent of NDGA. Since the compound has been found physiological harmless to humans the U.S. Department of Agriculture has sanctioned its use in lard to keep this product from getting rancid. For detailed account of the antioxidant properties of this new acid see February, 1944, issue of Oil & Soap, pages 33-35.

* * *

Dr. Lyman Benson, author of the 1940 edition of "The Cacti of Arizona," has been making a thorough study of the native species in Arizona and from time to time has been publishing his findings in various publications. In his latest paper (Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences 25:245-268, November, 1944) he has rearranged some of the species, particularly in the genera *Echinocereus*, *Mammillaria* and

Opuntia, making new combinations, relegating some names into synonymy and describing one new variety. The new entity is *Echinocereus Engelmannii* var. *Nicholi* which is said to be fairly common on the rocky hillsides in the Sonoran Desert, largely on the Papago Indian Reservation. Clumps of 10 to 30 erect stems are formed, bearing all yellow spines and lavender flowers. Such species of *Echinocereus* as *rectispinus*, *robustus*, *Boyce-Thompsonii* and *Bonkerae* are believed by him to be mere varieties of the common *E. Fendleri* and names like *E. coccineus*, *E. arizonicus*, *E. canyonensis*, *E. dasyacanthus* and *E. ctenoides* are dropped into synonymy. In the genus *Opuntia* such well known species as *Thorberi*, *Kunzei*, *Wrightiana*, *ursina*, *hystricina*, *rhodantha*, *microsperma* and *macrochiza* become varieties while names like *O. Rafinesquei*, *humifusa*, *Loomisii*, *delicata* and *plumbea* are relegated into synonymy. In the *Coryphanthaceae* such species as *C. aggregata*, *C. arizonica* and *C. deserti* are reduced to varietal rank under the older *Mammillaria vivipara* but this writer regrets that Dr. Benson does not recognize *Coryphantha* as a good genus.

* * *

I know our readers will be thrilled to know a little more about Dr. Lyman Benson and his background for then a clearer picture and understanding is possible. This modest gentleman does not pretend to be a cactus authority but we feel that much good ought to come out from his researches on this most puzzling group. Anyone who contemplates a serious study of the Cactaceae soon realizes that the family is particularly difficult because of the meager material in the herbaria and because of lack of records of the exact origin of nearly all the material in gardens. Dr. Benson's interest in Cacti dates back to 1929 when he made an extensive search for *Opuntia polyacantha* on one of the islands in Puget Sound. He failed to find this prickly pear there but the same Spring was fortunate enough to collect *Pediocactus Simpsonii* at its northernmost outpost near the Columbia River in Central Washington. This field work was a part of his ramblings in the State of Washington during the spring quarter in 1929 when he transferred temporarily from Stanford University to the University of Washington in order to have an opportunity to collect plants in the Pacific Northwest, and particularly in order to study the buttercups or *Ranunculus* of that region for a prospective master's thesis on the genus as it occurs in the Pacific states. He was so amazed at the occurrence of cacti so far north that he has liked them ever since. In 1931 to 1938 he taught at Bakersfield Junior College in California and frequently got a chance and a thrill to collect cacti from the desert; however he didn't make an attempt to conduct serious research on the group until the period at the University of Arizona from 1938 to 1944. For the last 3 or 4 years most of his attention was devoted to monographing the genus *Ranunculus* and to the preparation of a manual of Southwestern desert trees and shrubs (now in press at the University of Arizona as Biological Science Bulletin No. 6). As soon as the monograph on the North American buttercups is wound up he hopes to get back at the Cacti with all the vim possible. He is now teaching botany at Pomona College in Claremont, California.

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